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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SCUL](#) [UNESCO](#)

SUBJECT: WORLD HERITAGE EMBLEM WORKING GROUP MEETING

¶1. Summary: A brief pre-Seville meeting to continue to review the use of the World Heritage emblem ended with no decisions taken, other than the need to request the WH Committee to authorize funding (US\$30,000) for a study on good practices and trade marking the logo. The key decision, according to WH Director, Francesco Bandarin, to link and harmonize the UNESCO logo with that of WH, remains undecided. End summary.

¶2. The second meeting of the Working Group charged with reviewing issues concerning the use of the World Heritage logo met on 18 May 2009. World Heritage Committee chairman, Spain's ambassador, Maria San Segundo, led the one hour meeting. After approving the agenda, San Segundo asked WH Director Bandarin to recap the situation. Bandarin said that the main question that the Working Group must decide, is whether or not to link and harmonize the WH logo with the UNESCO logo. Such a decision, he said, will have repercussions at the national, state, local, and site levels regarding its use. Bandarin reminded the small group that the WH Convention is sovereign, and has the right to determine how its emblem should be used.

¶3. While no one voiced any major problems with the idea of linking to UNESCO's logo, the U.S. did note that it is important that there be some flexibility in the rules, to permit independent display of logos (Note: as in the U.S. case, where we were a WH member for 19 years, but not a member state of UNESCO. End note). Bahrain asked that a comparison be done to see how other Conventions dealt with the use of their logos.

¶4. The other point that was raised was the lack of information regard the cost and legal steps involved in trade marking the WH logo. The U.S. noted that there is also a cost in policing the logo's use, which might potentially be significant.

¶5. After reviewing the draft operational guidelines proposed by the WH Center, Israel raised the problem of graphic format of the logo, in the cases of Hebrew and Arabic, or Japanese and Chinese characters. The other point their expert raised was concerning linking multiple (three or more) logos, which could easily occur if local and site partners wish to have their emblems included. Another expert suggested that if the operational guidelines were too complex, they would ultimately be ignored. Bandarin said that once operational guidelines were agreed to, they would have to be approved by the WH Committee, rather than by the WH General Assembly. Brazil's expert, Antonio Ricarte, said that we might wish to "ventilate" the issue at the WH Committee meeting, as he thought we might want to "re-assess" the need for the operational guidelines to go the General Assembly.

¶6. The other point that came up was authorization of the logo's use. Several experts urged that we keep the need to maintain high interest and flexibility at the local level (site partners and managers), in determining who can permit the logo to be used. The same request for flexibility also came from the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), one of the WH's Advisory Bodies, which also wishes to use the logo from time to time.

¶7. Joanna Sullivan of the WH Center said that US\$30,000 should be sufficient for a preliminary study of good practices, and should also be enough to provide some basic information on the issues around trade marking.

¶8. The meeting ended with Mr. Bandarin urging the Working Group to move forward, as he said "we are ready for a political decision" on this matter. Chairman San Segundo noted that we had agreed on some elements (though she didn't specify which), and suggested that we pass along our thoughts and concerns, as it was clear that the Working Group would have to continue its work. Bandarin said that the operational guidelines that had been circulated would be transformed into an "info" document for the Seville WH Committee meeting.
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